

Radon Exposure and Testing

*The following text was generated by the Indiana State Department of Health;
Richard D. Feldman, M.D., Commissioner*

The Indiana State Department of Health joins with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Surgeon General in recommending that all buildings (homes) be tested for radon. This can be done quickly and inexpensively. You can test your home for radon by purchasing a radon detector from a state certified radon laboratory, or if you are in a real estate transaction you may hire a state certified radon tester.

Lung cancer risk for radon is determined by the amount and duration of exposure. The average annual indoor radon level is 1.3 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/l) and the average outdoor radon level is 0.4 pCi/l. **Action should be taken to reduce radon in a building if the average annual concentration is 4 pCi/l or greater.**

To determine if a radon problem exists in a building, the first step should be to conduct a short term test (screening measurement) to give an idea of the highest radon concentration in the building. For this type of test, it is necessary to keep the building closed off (i.e. With all windows closed and with doors kept closed as much as possible) for a minimum of twelve (12) hours prior to the test and throughout the entire test. The detector needs to be placed for at least 48 hours in the lowest level of the building suitable for occupancy. Thus, one can find out quickly and inexpensively whether or not there is a potential radon problem.

If the short term (screening) measurement is less than 4 pCi/l, follow-up measurements are probably not required. However, if this short term measurement is 4 to 10 pCi/l, usually the next step is to conduct a long term, follow-up test. It is important to remember that short term tests only serve to indicate if a potential radon problem exists; therefore, the Indiana State Department of Health recommends that follow-up measurements be conducted before deciding to undertake major efforts to permanently correct any radon problem. (However, in a real estate transaction, refer to the EPA *Home Buyer's and Seller's Guide to Radon*).

The Indiana State Department of Health requires state certification of individuals who provide any radon related services to the general public as defined in 410 IAC 5.1. Available upon request is a list of Indiana Certified Radon Testers and Mitigators, which includes certified laboratories. You are entitled to evidence of State Department of Health certification from any individual who provides radon services. You are also entitled to a written outline of any mitigation work proposed to be performed. The Indiana State Department of Health recommends that diagnostic testing be conducted to determine the source of radon entry into a building before deciding on the kind of radon reduction methods (mitigation) necessary to correct the problem.

If you have any questions, comments or complaints concerning individuals who provide radon related services, you may contact the Indiana State Department of Health, Division of Indoor and Radiologic Health, 2 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204-3003 or call 317/233-7150. You may also contact the Radon Hotline at 1-800-272-9723 to talk to a consultant or leave a message (to which a consultant will respond) on the Hotline answering machine.

The Indiana State Department of Health has the following EPA documents available upon request through its Radon Hotline (1-800-272-9723):

- EPA Citizen's Guide to Radon
- EPA Consumer's Guide to Radon Detection
- EPA Home Buyer's and Seller's Guide to Radon
- EPA Radon Mitigation Standards
- Information on Radon Test Kits
- Lists of State Certified Radon Contractors (Testers, Laboratories, and Mitigators)
- EPA's Map of Radon Zones
[Including Indiana Radon Zone Map](#)

IDEM and ISDH urge you to contact either the radon hotline or Mary Stiker prior to engaging in testing or mitigation of radon sources.

For Additional Information

If you have further requests, questions, or comments regarding the risks of radon gas, please contact:

Phil Eley
Indiana State Department of Health
Indoor & Radiological Health
2 North Meridian St., 5th Floor
Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003

(317) 233-7148

Peley@isdh.state.in.us

Other Sources of Radon Information Available on the Internet include:

[The National Radon Safety Board](http://www.nrsb.org/) {http://www.nrsb.org/}

[EPA radiation homepage](http://www.epa.gov/radiation/): {http://www.epa.gov/radiation/ }

[EPA Radon Homepage](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/) {http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/}